

From the Hometown of Susan B. Anthony

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Racism, Porn Invade Video Games

(NEW YORK, NEW YORK)--If American Multiple Industries has its way, thousands of Atari home video screens will feature Indigenous women as the target of white male aggression and sexual violence. The new "game," *Custer's Revenge*, was introduced during the National Music, Sound and Video Trade Show at the New York Hilton in October. The video cartridge costs \$50, and sports a bound female on its cover.

The object of *Custer's Revenge* is to maneuver a naked Custer (in cowboy hat, boots and scarf) with an erection, across the desert, arrows flying, towards a red-skinned dark haired Indian woman (a la feather in her hair). If Custer reaches the woman, he then rapes her as his "reward." The number of points depends on the number of rapes...in the words of the manufacturer, "You score, when you score."

The "game" has been the object of outraged protest by both Indigenous and women's groups. On October 14, the American Indian Community House of New York City, the National Organization of Women (NOW) N.Y., Women Against Pornography and others, picketed in front of the Hilton. Demonstrators carried signs condemning racist and sexual exploitation, pornography and profiteering. Chants against sexual and racial violence intermingled with Native American songs, a verbal reminder to onlookers of a people's fight to survive and to preserve its traditions. Several Indigenous protesters wore traditional dress.

Michael A. Bush, Executive Director of American Indian Community House stated, "As American Indians, we are vehemently opposed to the exploitative use of our race for the titillation of the public. We see this disgusting video game for what it truly is: a sexist, racist, sadistic expression, the sole purpose of which is to fill the pockets of its creators and promoters."

Denise D. Fuge, president of NOW-NY, added that *Custer's Revenge* "uses new technology to exploit women and degrade the American Indian community. (It) portrays rape as an erotic act, promotes the acceptability of raping certain



Feminists and Indigenous people demonstrate against 'Custer's Revenge' and two other X-rated video games in front of the Hilton Hotel in New York City. Photos by Betty Lane.

groups of women, i.e. Indian women, and ignores the fact that rape is a weapon of war where male revenge is enacted upon women who are viewed as the property of their enemies."

Home video games are most frequently used by adolescent males. The messages and implications of *Custer's Revenge* and other "X-rated" video "games," once internalized, push teenage boys closer to our culture's acceptance of recreational violence against women, perpetuating the vision of female as victim. Players become aggressors in a "game" of sexual assault. Rape becomes a sport, with a reward far more insidious than points on a video screen. As spokeswoman Robin Quinn of WAP points out, "*Custer's Revenge* not only says that rape is a legitimate form of revenge, but also that rape is a legitimate form of entertainment."

A representative for AMI has stated that the game is harmless fun and depicts "an act of two consenting adults (video images)." Atari has denied any agreement or contract with AMI for the manufacture or marketing

of *Custer's Revenge*, although their name appears on the cartridge packaging, stating it has not received any revenues from its sale. Atari has brought suit against AMI to stop the "game's" distribution and sale.

info:Kristen Reilly/WAP NEWSREPORT

EDITOR'S NOTE: AMI plans to market five or six more "X-rated" games in January, 1983, and seven other companies are presently developing games for release during the next year. These games are expected to gross \$1 billion annually from the adult market.

Women's and Indigenous groups, as well as Custer's descendants, are protesting the marketing of *Custer's Revenge*. If you also wish to register your protest, write: Stuart Kesten, President, American Multiple Industries, 8911 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91234 (213-855-7170). Letters supporting Atari's legal position should be sent to Legal Department, Atari Video Systems, 1265 Borregas Ave., Sunnyvale, CA. 94086.